

July 20, 1988

TO: File

FROM: Holland Shepherd, Reclamation Soils Specialist *HHS*

RE: Field Visit, Mountain Lion Mine, M/021/008, Iron County, Utah

On July 8, 1988 Wayne Hedberg and I met with Roy Benson, now of Geneva Steel, at the Iron Mountain Mine sites. The Mountain Lion site will soon be included in a permit which will incorporate the Iron Mountain, Blackhawk Fines, and Mountain Lion sites into one (M/021/008).

Our intention in visiting the Mountain Lion site, was to evaluate the vegetation success. The site was reclaimed in 1984 and 1985. Because of poor vegetative growth, the site was again seeded in the fall of 1987, based on recommendations from Frank Jensen.

I felt the vegetative growth to be adequate enough to release the operator from any further obligations in this area. Using a simple step transect method of cover evaluation, I determined the approximate cover to be 18%. According to the 1977 Mining and Reclamation Plan, native cover equals 50%. To meet the 70% requirement the vegetation at this site would have to be at least 35%. Native vegetative cover consists mostly of trees and shrubs and few forbs and grasses.

Releasing the operator at this time is based on the observations that the current vegetation is self-sustaining and abundant enough to act as a nurse source for increasing plant cover as time goes on. The site is stable, and it will take sometime before shrubs and trees are large enough to match the native stands in cover (longer than 3 years).



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The embankments of the dumps, at this site, were not well vegetated, although the operator had seeded them twice. The embankments were left at angle of repose and present an environment to steep and dry for easy plant development. Apparently the Division never required that the operator reduce these slopes in earlier agreements. The dump slopes will, no doubt, over a long period of time begin to support hardy volunteer species like rabbitbrush, snakeweed, shadscale, etc. They appear to be relatively stable (no significant erosion). According to Mr. Benson, metal stakes which he has installed at the top of the embankments show no surface movement.

I will put together a letter addressed to Geneva Steel releasing them from any further obligations at the Mountain Lion Site.

jb

cc: Lowell Braxton  
Wayne Hedberg

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